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NEWS

LETTER

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their History and Social Significance

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Esther Taylor, Editor

No. 13

COMFORT IN THE SADDLE - LATERALLY GAITED HORSES IN HISTORY

Alexander Mackay-Smith

Five gaits are natural to the horse - walk, trot, gallop, pace and rack. The walk and rack are four beat gaits, the gallop (canter) three beat, and the trot and pace two beat. The trot is a diagonal gait in which the fore foot and the opposite hind foot strike the ground in unison; the pace and rack are lateral gaits. In the pace the front and hind foot on the same side come down together, and in the rack the sequence is right hind, right front, left hind, left front at regular intervals. From the rider's point of view there is a very marked difference - in the trot the back goes up and down with each stride, but in the pace and rack it remains level. The only way for the rider to be comfortable at the trot is to rise (post) in the stirrups in cadence with the rise of the horse's back, whereas at the pace and rack all he has to do is to sit still and enjoy himself. The natural trotter goes easily from the trot to the gallop and back again, but the natural pacer is more limited - to go from the pace to the gallop he must first slow down to the walk.

Pacers In Antiquity

From the third millennium B.C., when equids were first used to ride and drive, down to the advent of the steam driven locomotive and the gasoline driven automobile during the last century, horses have had three primary uses - warfare, hunting and transportation. For the first two - the glamour pursuits - the galloper was generally employed. For transportation, the gallop being too taxing for long distance travel, the choice lay between the trotter and the pacer or racker, the latter two being preferred simply for reasons of comfort. Stirrups were an Asiatic invention, which did not reach Europe until at least the ninth century. Trotting for mile after mile without stirrups is uncomfortable, to say the least. Pacers, earlier known as amblers, are found, both in harness and ridden, from the fourth century B.C., to the Christian era, in the art of Crete, Egypt, Greece, Assyria, Phoenicia, China and other countries.

Rome

Under the Romans the most important type of horse was that used for travel, since the Empire was held together by its marvellous system of roads, over which the Imperial messengers rode and drove carrying vital dispatches, and over which the legions marched, cavalry being a secondary arm of the Roman military might. To carry messengers, political personages and Army brass the Romans established posting stations every twenty miles and used Paraveredi (literally relay horses) which paced, a word later altered in England to palfrey, a horse which also paced. These horses had to double in harness and under saddle, something that could not have been done in the pre-stirrup days by trotters, which Romans detested, calling them Successari (shakers) and Cruciatores (tormentors).



*The Wife
of Bath*

The Wife of Bath riding a pacer in the Ellesmere MS Canterbury Tales (c. 1420) by Geoffrey Chaucer (1340-1400). Courtesy of the Huntington Library.

Julius Caesar averaged seventy miles a day, using Paraveredi, in travelling from Rome to Northern France. Anthony Dent (Foals of Epona, London, 1962, p. 289) estimates that it required approximately 2500 Paraveredi, all stallions, to horse the 5000 miles of Roman roads in Britain. The best pacers came from northwest Spain, the horses from Asturia being known as Asturcones, and from Galicia as Thieldones. In describing the Asturians Silvius Italicus uses the words "incuncusso-dorsus"

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(with unshaken back), the quality which so recommended them to stirrup-less riders.

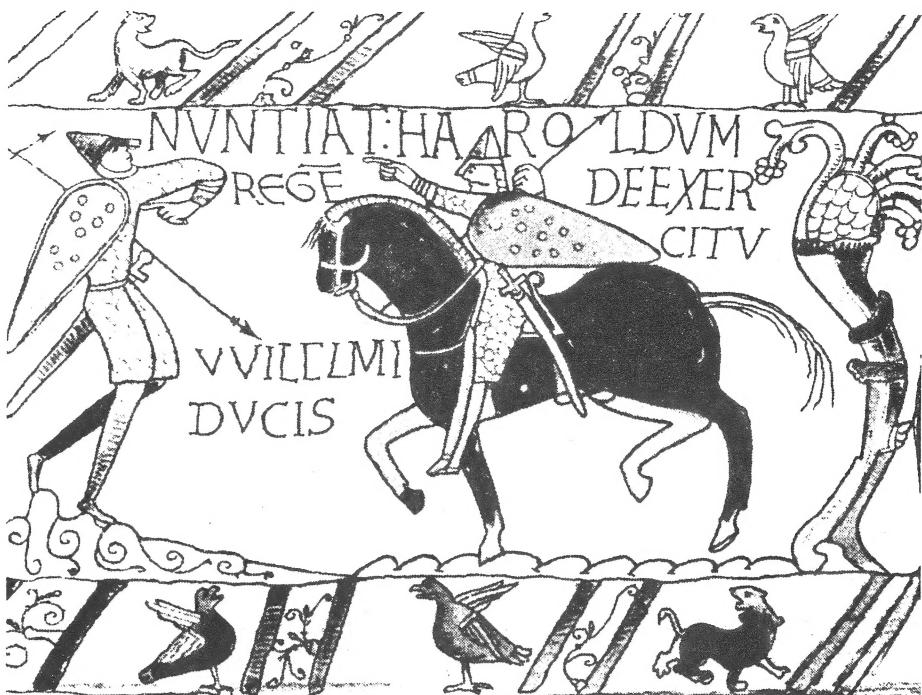
Europe and the Far East

With the advent of the stirrup in Europe one might have expected riders to take to trotters for travel. That they did not is because it took another 1000 years to invent rising or posting to the trot. Important personages riding pacers were frequent subjects for European medieval and Renaissance artists, and for the artists of early China, Korea and India.

Britain

The Anglo-Saxons made good use of the pacers which the Romans left behind. The Bayeux Tapestry, depicting the Battle of Hastings (1066 A.D.) and woven later in the century, shows Harold, the defeated Saxon king, riding a pacer, while the Great Seals of King Richard I of England (1189-1199) and King John (1199-1216) show these sovereigns in light armor riding pacers. After the subsequent adoption of heavy armor the knight retained his pacer (ambler or racker) for traveling and hunting, but added to his stable a galloping destrier for warfare. In the Ellesmere manuscript (c. 1420) of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales the pilgrims of high degree are pictured riding amblers, those of lower station riding trotters. The 1512 Household Inventory of the fifth Duke of Northumberland lists 'Palfreys of my lady's - an ambling horse for his lordship to journey on dayly. A proper ambling little nagg for his lordship when he goeth on hunting or hawking.' Blunderville the Elizabethan, in his great book, "The Fowre Chiefyst Offices Belonging to Horsemanshippe" (1565), speaks of "the ambling horse - for all men's travels", giving instruction on how to breed them; Rosalind in Shakespeare's "As You Like It," noted as "wearisome" the hard pace of the trotting horse; and in 1614 James I of England sent as a present to Philip III of Spain, "ten horses, of which fowre ambling, and fowre ambling mares." Even after King Charles II, by popularizing racing, turned the tide toward the galloper-trotter, the pacer continued into the next century as a riding horse. The very long stirrup leathers used before Charles II's day actually made rising to the trot impossible. The term posting comes from the post boys who rode the carriage horses pulling for-hire post chaises which first appeared in 1753 on English highways. Recent improvements to the latter made possible faster trotting speeds whose discomfort forced post boys to invent posting.

A number of treatises on pacing and pacer horses were printed during the seventeenth century. In 1605 there was published in London Gervase Markham's "How to Trayne and Teach Horses to Amble", a text repeated in various later works by the same author. It also included an illustration of the "trammels" (hopples) used for training horses to amble.



King Harold at the 1066 Battle of Hastings as depicted in the Bayeux Tapisserie de la Reine Mathilde (c. 1092)

Similar illustrations appeared in William Browne "His Fifty Years Practice" (London, 1624) and Sir William Hope's "Compleat Horseman" (London, 1696).

The Americas

Whereas the Spanish conquistadores brought chiefly galloping horses from Seville and other ports in southern Spain, the English and Irish settlers who colonized the Atlantic seaboard in the first half of the seventeenth century brought the best of the horses which they had been using at home, mostly pacers. For example, in 1666 Sir William Berkeley, the Royal Governor, imported into Virginia a shipment of pacing and running Irish hobbys, four mares and a stallion, from Sir Thomas Southwell of Castle Mattress in County Limerick, Ireland. Using this stock the Virginia planters developed the colonial Quarter Horse, America's first breed of horses, pacers with tremendous galloping speed at a quarter of a mile.

More than a century went by before the colonists imported a running horse stallion of the breed later to be called Thoroughbred (BULLE ROCK, imported to Virginia 1730), but by 1760 fourteen Thoroughbred stallions had been imported to Virginia, seven to South Carolina and Maryland, one each to Pennsylvania and New York, and none to New England and New Jersey. Even after the Revolution, when running racing became immensely popular and better roads led to travel by carriage behind trotting horses, the plantation owners continued to ride their gaited Quarter horses and Narragansett Pacers "with unshaken backs".

During the first few decades of the nineteenth century pacing stallions were advertised for the purpose of getting saddle horses. In Virginia there was ROEBUCK I, better than half colonial Quarter Horse,

purchased 1809 in southside Virginia by General John Hartwell Cocke, plus his sons and grandsons. Another Virginia stallion was Thomas Mann Randolph's HIATOGA, a roan horse of the strain developed in Mississippi and Tennessee by the Chickasaw Indians who got their foundation stock from across the Mississippi river. He stood in Virginia from about 1798 to about 1803 and then was ridden by a preacher out to Kentucky where his sons founded a famous strain of Hiatoga pacers. A "HIATOGA, the beautiful Virginia horse of the Narragansett breed" was advertised in Gallatin, Tennessee, in 1826. In Maryland there was the Tom strain of pacers, also taken to Kentucky and there advertised as Narragansett pacers from 1818 to 1831.

Many Narragansett mares were taken to Canada and used to produce pacers, introducing a third strain, also roans, which went to Kentucky, the founder of which was COPPERBOTTOM, foaled in 1809, and advertised there from 1816 to 1833. COPPERBOTTOM (or possibly one of his sons) went to Tennessee as an old horse where he died in 1846.

OLD PILOT (f. 1824), went from Canada to Kentucky in 1832 where he stood until 1853.

Another pacer, TOM HAL, purchased in Philadelphia, was taken to Kentucky in 1824 - his sons and grandsons stood in Tennessee. His son, PILOT JR., foaled 1844, was a premier sire at the Woodburn Stud of Robert Aitcheson Alexander near Lexington, Kentucky. TOM HAL and PILOT founded important branches of the Standardbred harness racing breed, which contains much other pacing blood and continues to produce more pacers than trotters.

Today the "unshaken back" gaits are

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DONATIONS

Mrs. William Biddle gave: A. H. Higginson, British and American Sporting Authors, and Lady Wentworth: Thoroughbred Racing Stock. These books were presented to the library in memory of her late husband, Major General William Biddle.

Mrs. Ford Draper presented copies of books written by her father, J. Stanley Reeve, the well known American sporting author: Foxhunting Recollections, Radnor Reminiscences and That Reminds Me.

Colonel Howard Fair donated bound volumes of Polo magazines for the years 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1937

Mrs. Eleanor Langley Fletcher presented the 1838 edition of Nimrod's Sporting, illustrated with engravings after Gainsborough, Landseer and Cooper and beautifully conserved in its original leather binding.

Professor Donald Kyle gave a copy of his manuscript on early Greek horse races: A Historical Study of Athletics in Ancient Athens to 322 B.C.

Mr. Thomas Marston donated: Galloping Off In All Directions An Anthology; Dr. Jean Pommery, What To Do Till the Veterinarian Comes; Aymar and Sagarin, The Personality of the Dog; George Booth, Dogs; J. R. Ackerley, My Dog Tulip; Judith Forbis, The Classic Arabian Horse; Michel Klein, For Love of the Beasts; Dr. Michael Fox, Between Animal and Man; Norman Johnson, D.V.M., The Complete Puppy and Dog Book; and Kurt Unkelbach, The American Dog Book.

The Ohrstrom Foundation continues their support of the library through a cash donation.

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represented by the rack of the American (Kentucky) Saddle Horse; by the running walk of the Tennessee Walking Horse; by the fox trot of the Missouri Fox Trotter; by the paso gaits of the Cuban Paso Fino, the Peruvian Paso and the Brazilian Campolina and Mangalarga; by the tolt of the Iceland pony; and by certain strains in India and Mongolia. The dam of Gaines' Denmark, foundation sire of the American Saddle Horse breed, was by COCKSPUR, whose sire of the same name was a pacer brought from Canada to Missouri. Furthermore, the National Saddle Horse Breeders' Register (Vol. I, p.19) recognizes old COPPERBOTTOM as a foundation sire. The roan Hiatogas and Copperbottoms correspond in color to ROAN ALLEN, foundation sire of the Tennessee Walking Horse. Finally the dams of three leading sons of JUSTIN MORGAN, founder of the Morgan Breed, were Narragansett pacers; these sons were SHERMAN MORGAN (f. 1808), WOODBURY MORGAN (f. 1816) and REVENGE (f. 1815).

So, 2000 years later, the blood of the Asturians still contributes to our comfort in the saddle.

AMERICAN FARMER INDEX

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Richards defeated Lady Lightfoot (4 mi. about in 7 min. 31 sec.). On Tuesday Flying Childers (of Virginia) defeated Partnership (3 mi. in 5 min. 42 sec.). On Wednesday Dutchess of Marlborough won over Sir Harry and Flaxen-Mane (two 2 mi. heats - time not given). Owners names are sometimes mentioned and sometimes not. American Eclipse was owned by C. W. Van Ranst of New York, Henry by Colonel W. R. Johnson from south of the Potomac, Betsy Richards by Colonel Johnson and Flying Childers by General Wynn.²⁵

Breed improvement was one of the subjects that appeared early in The American Farmer and was never lost sight of by the editor. A letter from Sir John Sinclair of Edinburg, Scotland, dealing with this subject in depth, was published in 1820.²⁶ Two years later there was an article on the New York Association for the Improvement of the Breed of Horses.²⁷ The following year the Maryland Association for the Improvement of the Breed of Horses appeared in the news.²⁸ The Maryland Association held its First Annual Races October 22, 23 and 24, 1823.²⁹ Increased interest in racing roused discussion. Some claimed that contest on the turf is the way to test stallions and to improve the breed.³⁰ On the other side were those who insisted that racing retards the improvement of horses for saddle and harness.³¹ Under the heading "Amusements of the turf" there is a plea for their regulation by gentlemen.³²

The following race courses were mentioned in The American Farmer: the Union Course on Long Island,³³ the Fairview Course in Baltimore,³⁴ the Canton Course near Baltimore,³⁵ the Washington Course in the District of Columbia,³⁶ and the Old Race Course in Charleston, South Carolina.³⁷

All of these areas of activity involved people: owners, breeders, judges, importers of horses or asses, readers who wrote letters to the editor and many others. All have been recorded.

This simplified review does not touch on all the different kinds of information found in the early issues of The American Farmer. It has been prepared as an introduction to the card index for Volumes I through V. When the index has been completed a final report will be presented to the Members of the National Sporting Library.

References

1. The American Farmer (Baltimore), 1820, Vol. II, p. 11.
2. Ibid., 1821, Vol. III, p. 219 and 227.
3. Ibid., p. 227.
4. Ibid., 1819, Vol. I, p. 190.
5. Ibid., 1820, Vol. II, p. 405.
6. Ibid., 1822, Vol. IV, p. 359.
7. Ibid., p. 281.
8. Ibid., 1820, Vol. II, p. 404.
9. Ibid., 1822, Vol. IV, p. 313.
10. Ibid., p. 161.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., 1820, Vol. II, p. 408.

Ibid., 1821, Vol. III, p. 24, 32, 98.

Ibid., 1822, Vol. IV, p. 313.

12. Ibid., p. 56, 114, 116, 136, 152, 313.

13. Ibid., p. 272, 282.

14. Ibid., 1823, Vol. V, p. 181.

15. Ibid., 1822, Vol. IV, p. 98.

16. Ibid., 1821, Vol. III, p. 24, 384

Ibid., 1822, Vol. IV, p. 24, 113, 392.

17. Ibid., 1821, Vol. III, p. 32.

18. Ibid., 1823, Vol. V, p. 370.

19. Ibid., 1821, Vol. III, p. 97, 312.

20. Ibid., 1823, Vol. V, p. 56.

21. Ibid., p. 8.

22. Ibid., p. 243.

23. Ibid., 1821, Vol. III, p. 24, 384.

Ibid., 1822, Vol. IV, p. 24, 113, 392.

24. Ibid., 1823, Vol. V, p. 344.

25. Ibid., p. 96.

26. Ibid., 1820, Vol. II, p. 404.

27. Ibid., 1822, Vol. IV, p. 259

Ibid., 1823, Vol. V, p. 127.

28. Ibid., p. 222, 232.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid., 1822, Vol. IV, p. 98, 282.

31. Ibid., p. 390, 391.

32. Ibid., 1822, Vol. IV, p. 98.

33. Ibid. 1823, Vol. V, p. 127, 128.

34. Ibid., p. 96, 232.

35. Ibid., p. 222.

36. Ibid., p. 127.

37. Ibid., 1822, Vol. IV, p. 404.

Ibid., 1823, Vol. V, p. 228.

A REMINDER! FRIENDS!

Membership renewals are due.

AMERICAN TURF REGISTER

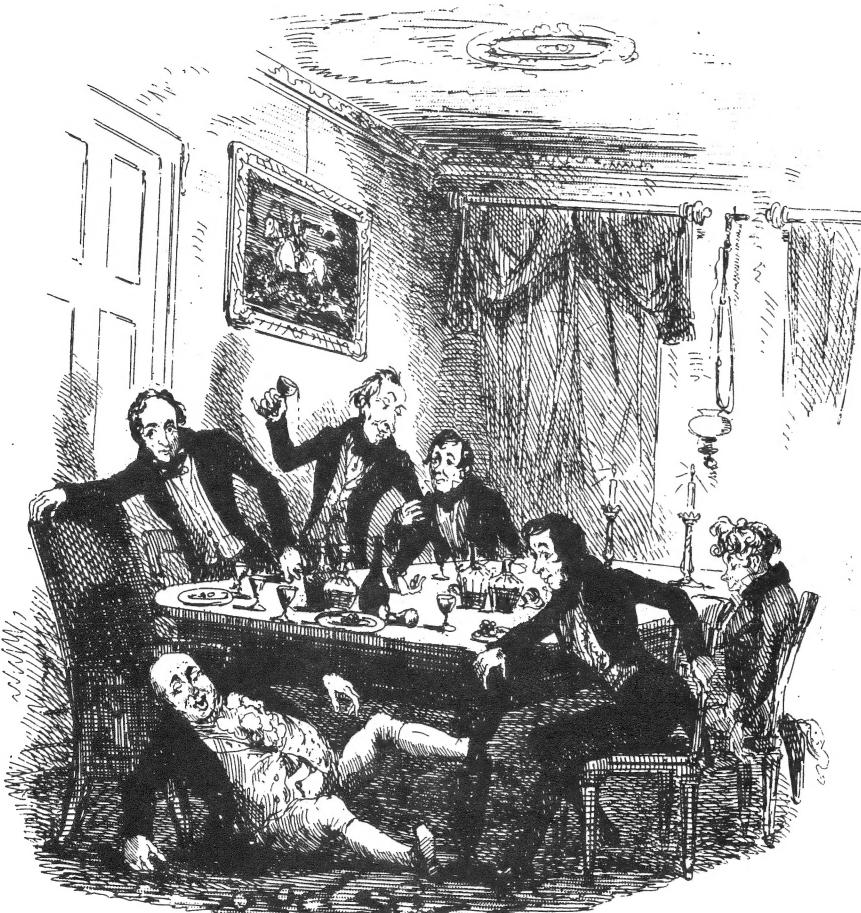
(Continued from Page 3)

already had been accomplished. The American Turf Register was the single most influential factor in encouraging, promoting, organizing and unifying the racing world of the 1830's from which has grown the efficiently run racing circuits of today. A subscriber, writing under the pen name of "Yorick" wrote to The American Turf Register: "You (Mr. Editor) would have been gratified to hear the veterans of the turf exulting at the revival of the olden times, when the best men thought it no offense to heaven, nor good morals, to see a race course thronged with fair ladies and honest yoemen. If there be sin in this revival, you, Mr. Editor, have a goodly portion to answer for. For ... the public ascribes it in a great measure to the influence of your magazine."

References

1. The American Turf Register (Baltimore), 1830, Vol. II, p. 572.
2. Ibid., 1834, Vol. VI, p. 54.
3. Ibid., p. 59.
4. Ibid., p. 173.
5. Ibid., 1831, Vol. III, p. 169.
6. Ibid., 1833, Vol. V, p. 482.
7. Ibid., p. 482.

RARE FIRST EDITION OF JORROCKS'S JAUNTS AND JOLLITIES RECENTLY DONATED TO THE NATIONAL SPORTING LIBRARY WELCOME ADDITION TO UNIQUE COLLECTION ON FOXHUNTING



The Frontispiece of Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities, engraving by Phiz, from the 1838 edition published by Robert Smith Surtees.

Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities or the Hunting, Shooting, Racing, Driving, Sailing, Eating, Eccentric and Extravagant Exploits of the Renowned Sporting Citizen, Mr. John Jorrocks. Published by Robert Smith Surtees in 1838.

This rare 1st edition of Jorrocks's, illustrated with 12 engravings by Phiz, was recently given to the National Sporting Library by Mrs. Winthrope Pyemont. It is one of the two most important books on hunting along with Peter Beckford's *Thoughts On Hunting* (Newsletter - Vol. II, June 1976).

Robert Smith Surtees, born at Hamsterley Hall, near Newcastle, in 1805, younger son of Squire Anthony Surtees, was described by Nimrod as "every inch a sportsman". Son, grandson and great-grandson of Masters of Foxhounds, he hunted from an early age with his father's hounds and those of his neighbor, Ralph Lambton. He was educated at Ovingham and Durham Grammar Schools and then was articled to a Newcastle solicitor's clerk in 1822 and "further articled" to Mr. Bell of Bow Churchyard, London, in 1825.

However, he showed no interest, his "taste for scribbling", as he called it, taking precedence; he wrote for the Sporting Magazine till 1831 and was co-founder, with Rudolph Ackermann the younger, of The New Sporting Magazine, in 1831; he also published the Horseman's Manual the same year. When Surtees succeeded to Hamsterley in 1838, he first formed a pack of hounds and then published a pick of fugitive sketches under the title, Jorrocks's Jaunts and Jollities. In 1846 he published Analysis of the Hunting Field, with illustrations by Henry Alken Jr. Nine novels by Surtees appeared in the years 1845-1865.

Robert Surtees saw English country life of the 1820's-1850's principally through a foxhunter's eyes. A satirist with an imitable sense of the ridiculous, his caricatures stand right out in front on the stage of hunting literature. He hated the regular army and was contemptuous of the aristocracy. He was both admirer and detractor of Nimrod, whom he burlesques as Pomponius Ego, the "smart hunting correspondent".

It is the function of a satirist to make people uncomfortable. Contemporary critics in turn did not spare him: Thomas Seccombe dismissed Surtees' characters as coarse; Professor Saintsbury called them artificial; and the Hon. J. W. Fortescue attributed the success of the characters to their illustrations by John Leech, Henry Alken and Hablot K. Browne (Phiz). But the final test of novelist's characters are whether they remain in the memory. And it is because Surtees' characters are so vital and so true that they have survived to this day.

Bibliography: All the following books are in the National Sporting Library Collection.

Cooper, Leonard. *R.S. Surtees*. London: Arthur Barker, 1952.

Steel, Anthony. *Jorrocks's England*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1932.

Watson, J.N.P. *The Book of Fox hunting*. New York: Arco, 1978.



FOXHUNTING COMES FIRST INTEREST SURVEY SHOWS

A rousing vote of thanks to the Friends who returned the News Letter Survey Cards! It is still not too late! If by chance you did not receive a card, please forgive us and drop us a postcard or note telling what field sport or related activity interests you, whether you are actively involved and whether you would like to write an article (articles) for the News Letter. Also give us your suggestions. This information is being added to each member's card in our file as a part of our permanent record.

The Survey shows that the leading interest is foxhunting. Thoroughbred racing and breeding come second. Then follow history and art. Most people indicated more than one area of interest. This gives only an impressionistic glimpse of the answers received. The complete tally includes at least one enthusiast for almost every field sport or equestrian activity from small game to big game, from beagling to coursing, from trail riding to dressage.

This survey is being used and will continue to be used in planning the News Letter. Please keep us up to date on your interests and help us with your suggestions.

Give a Membership

Give a membership in The National Sporting Library to someone you know who would enjoy it. Send us the name and address of your friend(s) together with your check and we will send a gift card and the News Letter. In case you wish your own card enclosed, just send if along with your check and the name and address of the new member.